Approaches for improving the nutrition of adolescent girls and women of reproductive age

PTB/LBW Global Technical Working Group Meeting
Copenhagen, Denmark
16 May 2016
Session Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

• Identify programmatic approaches for improving nutritional status of adolescent and women of reproductive age (WRA)
• Become familiar with the new Minimum Dietary Diversity-Women indicator
• Identify and access resources for improving adolescent and women’s nutrition and preventing pre-term birth and low-birth weight
Nutrition of adolescent girls and WRA: the current context

**Current percentage of WRA underweight, overweight, and obese**
Source: most recent DHS

**Global prevalence of anemia**
Source: Stevens et al., 2013

Anemia: < 110 g/L for children and pregnant women; 120 g/L for women
Programmatic approaches
Programmatic responses to adolescent girls and women’s nutrition

- In 2014 SPRING conducted a literature review of 53 nutrition-specific programs
  - Highlights practices promoted and delivery platforms
  - Only 10 specifically targeted adolescent girls
  - 9 provided data on effectiveness of approach
- **Uttar Pradesh, India** (Vir et al., 2008)
  - Weekly IFA supplementation deworming tablets and family life education for school-going and non-school going girls; school system and community “girl-to-girl” approach
  - Significantly improved hemoglobin levels and reduced anemia prevalence after 6 months of implementation
- **Yen Vai province, Vietnam** (Passerini et al., 2012)
  - IFA supplementation distributed to non-pregnant women in two districts for 20 months through village health workers
  - Reported correlations between the distribution of IFA supplementation and de-worming for WRA and a reduction in the prevalence of LBW infants at district hospitals

Still a need for more rigorous research and evaluation of programs

With USAID support, SPRING is testing a new and innovative approach in collaboration with Digital Green called “Community Video”

- This novel social and behavior change communication approach promotes locally produced participatory media, including radio spots and videos

Local Video - India

Maternal diet during pregnancy and food taboos Odia VARRAT Odisha

Question:
What will happen if pregnant women eat less food?

Answer:
Baby will be born prematurely with low birthweight and the mother will not be healthy.
Research approaches
Minimum Dietary Diversity – Women (MDD-W) Indicator

• Indicator definition: The proportion of women 15-49 years of age who consumed food items from at least five out of ten defined food groups the previous day or night

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grains, white roots/tubers, plantains</th>
<th>Dairy</th>
<th>Other vitamin A-rich fruits &amp; vegetables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pulses (beans, peas and lentils)</td>
<td>Meat, poultry and fish</td>
<td>Other vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts and seeds</td>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>Other fruits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- How can this be interpreted?
  - Groups of WRA where a higher proportion consume ≥5 of the 10 food groups are likely to have higher micronutrient adequacy

- How should this indicator be measured?
  - MDD-W can be used as a proxy indicator to describe the micronutrient adequacy of women’s diets in national and sub-national assessments

- How is it useful in the context of programs?
  - MDD-W may be useful when the program design, activities, and impact pathway indicate a potential to increase food group diversity
  - It is not adequate to characterize individual diet quality
USAID Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy and technical implementation briefs
USAID strategy for maternal and adolescent nutrition

- The MSN Strategy prioritizes women of reproductive age and adolescent girls for multi-sectoral nutrition programming

- Implementation briefs are available on USAID Global Health website
  - Maternal Nutrition for Girls and Women
  - The 1,000-day Window of Opportunity
  - Role of Nutrition in Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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USAID Bureau for Global Health, Office of Health Infectious Disease and Nutrition
Additional Resources

- **SPRING**
  - [https://www.spring-nutrition.org/technical-areas/sbcc/adolescent-and-womens-nutrition](https://www.spring-nutrition.org/technical-areas/sbcc/adolescent-and-womens-nutrition)
  - [https://www.spring-nutrition.org/technical-areas/sbcc/community-media](https://www.spring-nutrition.org/technical-areas/sbcc/community-media)

- **FANTA/FAO**
  - [http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5486e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5486e.pdf)

- **USAID**